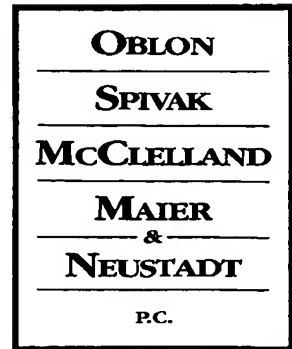




Docket No.: 243044US3

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313



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RE: Application Serial No.: 10/666,240

Applicants: Shinji ASAMI, et al.

Filing Date: September 22, 2003

For: BINDING APPARATUS, PAPER PROCESSING  
APPARATUS AND IMAGE FORMING SYSTEM

Group Art Unit: 3722

Examiner: GATES, ERIC ANDREW

SIR:

Attached hereto for filing are the following papers:

**Response to Restriction Requirement**

Our check in the amount of \$0.00 is attached covering any required fees. In the event any variance exists between the amount enclosed and the Patent Office charges for filing the above-noted documents, including any fees required under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for any necessary Extension of Time to make the filing of the attached documents timely, please charge or credit the difference to our Deposit Account No. 15-0030. Further, if these papers are not considered timely filed, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for the necessary extension of time. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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DOCKET NO: 243044US3

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :  
SHINJI ASAMI, ET AL. : EXAMINER: GATES, ERIC ANDREW  
SERIAL NO: 10/666,240 :  
FILED: SEPTEMBER 22, 2003 : GROUP ART UNIT: 3722  
FOR: BINDING APPARATUS, PAPER :  
PROCESSING APPARATUS AND IMAGE  
FORMING SYSTEM

**RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT**

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

SIR:

In response to the Restriction Requirement mailed March 23, 2006, Applicants hereby elect Group VI, Claims 25, 28 and 30-35. This election is made with traverse.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all claims 1-37 is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one group of claims would necessarily encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. For example, Applicants respectfully assert that Group IV (claims 22-23), Group VII (claims 26-28), and claim 29 should be included with hereby elected Group IV.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be performed without serious burden. MPEP §803 states that if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the Restriction Requirement and to examine all claims in this application.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
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